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FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3128
INFO RUEHBE/AMEMBASSY BELIZE 1284
RUEHWN/AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN 5442
RUEHGE/AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN 3551
RUEHKG/AMEMBASSY KINGSTON 8389
RUEHPU/AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE 3409
RUEHSP/AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN 4569
RUEHDG/AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO 2684
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA 0271
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0067

C O N F I D E N T I A L NASSAU 001302

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STATE FOR WHA/CAR RCBUDDEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/23/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KUNR](#) [BF](#)

SUBJECT: BAHAMAS FOCUSED ON SEPTEMBER NAM MEETING

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Brent Hardt for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Per Department's request, Poloff spoke with Ministry of Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Marilyn Zonicle regarding The Bahamas participation in the Non-Aligned Movement's (NAM) September 14 meeting in Havana. Ms. Zonicle confirmed that Foreign Minister Mitchell would attend, possibly with the Prime Minister. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has strongly recommended the Prime Minister's participation, but he has not yet confirmed. Zonicle noted, "we believe that the Prime Minister's participation is necessary because the NAM meeting is likely to set Bahamian foreign policy on key issues, including UN reform and response to threats in the Middle East."

¶2. (C) COMMENT: The MFA's statement that NAM will shape its foreign policy is telling, but not surprising. The fact that MFA is pushing for the PM's attendance, and that the PM is considering it, also reflects the level of importance The Bahamas places on its involvement with the NAM. Christie has usually deferred to Foreign Minister Mitchell on foreign affairs and has been reluctant to travel to international meetings. For example, Christie will not attend UNGA and did not attend in 2005. Christie's attendance at a NAM meeting in Cuba, while skipping the UN, would also reinforce the perception raised by the opposition that the Government is devoting excessive focus on links with Cuba. END COMMENT.
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